

## **DoD HUMANITARIAN DAILY RATIONS (HDR)**

- In April 1993, then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin approved the procurement of an alternative to the operational Meal Ready to Eat (MRE) for humanitarian purposes. The Department's Humanitarian Assistance Team developed the HDR to provide a low cost, easily delivered, daily ration for use in foreign countries to alleviate hunger after man-made or natural disasters and more importantly, to replace use of more expensive US military MRE rations in disaster situations. The HDR is designed to provide a full days' sustenance to a moderately malnourished individual. The HDR program is managed by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency.
- More than 18 million HDR have been delivered to over 24 countries experiencing adverse effects from war, famine, floods, or earthquakes (for example, Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Bosnia, Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, East Timor, Fiji, Georgia, Haiti, Honduras, Iraq, Kosova, Macedonia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Poland, Uganda, and Zambia).
- The HDR is less costly than the MRE ration that was previously used for disaster relief.
  - An HDR costs about \$4.50 for an entire day; an MRE costs about \$24.00 for 3 meals – a savings of \$20.00 per day (or over 80 percent) to the taxpayers.
- The HDR nutritional content is tailored for people who are near starvation or fleeing from catastrophe and need to eat enroute to a safe haven. Meals are culturally sensitive and contain no animal or animal by-products. Alcohol-based products are not included.
  - Meals have about 2,300 calories, weigh 30 ounces, fortified with vitamins and are adequate for the widest range of cultural or religious dietary restrictions (10-13% protein, 27-30% fat, and not less than 60% carbohydrates).
  - HDR will maintain the health of moderately malnourished recipients until conventional relief programs or targeted feeding can be established.
- Each ration consists of two main vegetarian meals based on lentils, rice with beans and peas in tomato sauce, and other items like bread, a fruit pastry, a fortified biscuit, peanut butter and spices. See menu contents on next page.
- The HDR can be airdropped to permit wide dispersal to avoid hoarding and fighting over larger pallet-sized loads, and to avoid danger to people on the ground posed by air delivered pallets. HDR can be stored for 3 years at temperatures not to exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit.
- During the early stages of the conflict in Afghanistan, then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld directed the color be changed from yellow to 'apricot' due to concerns that individuals would confuse the yellow-colored HDR with some types of cluster munitions.
- In September 2005 all HDR stocks, about 1 million meals, were transferred to FEMA to support U.S. Gulf Coast citizens recovering from the effects of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- HDRs are currently stored in the United States and delivered by aircraft or ship to locations designated by the customer and are also regionally pre-positioned in anticipation of need.

## **HUMANITARIAN DAILY RATION (HDR) MENU CONTENTS**

(5 menus with three variations within each menu)

### **MENU 1**

Bean Salad, Barley Stew, Beans & Rice in Tomato Sauce  
Brown & Wild Rice w/Lentils, Lentil Stew, Herb Rice,  
Crackers, Vegetable Biscuits, Peanut Butter,  
Jam, Raisins, Fruit Bar, Flat Bread, Shortbread, Cookies  
Fruit Pastry, Accessory Pack \*

### **MENU 2**

Bean Salad, Barley Stew, Red Beans & Rice  
Rice w/Beans, Peas in Tomato Sauce, Yellow Rice  
Crackers, Vegetable Biscuits, Peanut Butter, Jam, Vegetable Crackers  
Raisins, Fruit Bar, Flat Bread, Shortbread Cookies,  
Fruit Pastry, Shortbread, Accessory Pack \*

### **MENU 3**

Bean Salad, Barley Stew, Lentil Stew  
Lentils & Vegetables, Rice & Vegetables in Sauce Herb Rice  
Crackers, Vegetable Biscuits, Biscuit,  
Peanut Butter, Jam, Vegetable Crackers, Raisins, Fruit Bar,  
Flat Bread, Shortbread Cookie, Apple Fruit Bar, Fruit Pastry, Accessory Pack \*

### **MENU 4**

Beans w/Potatoes, Rice & Vegetables, Pasta in Tomato Sauce  
Brown & Wild Rice w/Lentils, Peas in Tomato Sauce Yellow Rice  
Flat Bread, Vegetable Biscuits, Crackers, Vegetable Crackers  
Peanut Butter, Strawberry Jam, Raisins, Fruit Bar, Fruit Pastry  
Shortbread, Cookies, Accessory Pack \*

### **MENU 5**

Lentils & Vegetables, Lentil Stew,  
Beans w/Potatoes, Peas in Tomato Sauce, Red Beans & Rice  
Crackers, Vegetable Biscuits, Peanut Butter, Jam, Vegetable Crackers,  
Raisins, Fruit Bar Flat Bread, Shortbread, Cookies, Apple Fruit Bar  
Accessory Pack \*

**Accessory Pack Contents:** Red Pepper, Pepper, Salt, Sugar, Spoon, Matches (unprinted)  
& Towelette (alcohol-free), Napkin